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‘O daughter ... forget your people and your father’s house’: Early Modern Women Writers and the Spanish Imaginary

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I almost ceased to breathe their name
Then caught it echoing down the wind,
Blown backwards from the lips of Fame

Emily Lawless, ‘After Aughrim’¹

1 Introduction

In the early 1650s, two very different women made the treacherous sea journey from Galway, Ireland, to Spain. Both left in a hurry; both faced hazards and discomfort in equal measure; and both arrived in Spain at a time when the country was not recognized as ‘a fashionable resort for leisured travellers’.² Most importantly, both women were to undergo Spanish experiences that had a creatively transformative effect on their individual writing lives. The first woman to set sail was Lady Ann Fanshawe (1625–1680). Born in London to an elite family which suffered a typical reversal of fortunes during the English Civil War, Ann married her second cousin, Richard Fanshawe (1608–1666), in 1644.³ It was this marriage which was to steer the Protestant Fanshawe into an itinerant diplomatic life which involved the criss-crossing of several cultures and continents. After a period in the Channel Islands and France, the Fanshawe family decamped for

¹ Emily Lawless, ‘After Aughrim’, in *The English Poets*, ed. Thomas Humphry Ward (New York, London: Macmillan and Co. (1880–1918; Bartleby.com, 2013), Vol. V. Browning to Rupert Brooke <http://www.bartleby.com/337/1589.html> [18–20]. [Accessed 14th June 2016].

² John Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT/London: Yale U. P., 1989), 235.

³ Ann’s father, Sir John Harrison, having supported King Charles at Nottingham, was taken prisoner by order of parliament. His estate was sequestrated in 1642. See Peter Davidson, ‘Fanshawe [*née* Harrison], Ann, Lady Fanshawe’, *Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9146>> (accessed 6 May 2015).

Ireland, residing there for two years (1648–1650) before fleeing from the depredations of Cromwell’s campaign and travelling in 1650 to Spain. (Fanshawe left Spain in 1651, spending a further period there in 1664–1665). Only three years later, in 1653, Mary Bonaventure Browne was to make the same journey. Born in Galway around 1615 to an Old English merchant family, Browne joined the Poor Clares in 1632, going on to serve as Abbess from 1647 to 1650. She was one of a band of Poor Clare nuns who moved to Spain from Ireland as a result of the Cromwellian edict of 1653 ‘commanding all nuns, of whatsoever condition, to marry or quit the kingdom’.⁴ Browne died in Madrid in or before 1694.⁵

At some point in the late 1660s and early 1670s, both women would write up their experiences. To Browne is attributed sole authorship of the chronicle, *History of the Irish Poor Clares*, which was originally written in Irish and covers the period from 1629–1670. Browne wrote this *History* around 1668, and, highlighting moments of harmony as part of a larger narrative of displacement, trauma and exile, she plays out her narrative against an inescapable backdrop of religious persecution.⁶ Composed in the mid 1670s, Fanshawe’s memoirs were written ten years after her husband’s death; they record the births of their twenty-four children, plot the various tribulations and travels occasioned by the Civil War and the interregnum and, crucially, describe the two periods spent in Spain. Both records emerge from a more widespread practice of exchanging Ireland for Spain in support of securing a livelihood and following a calling.⁷ Igor Pérez Tostado has identified ‘the four main factors that led to migration from Ireland [...] the economic and subsistence crises that repeatedly affected the island [...] the movement of elites from England into Ireland [...] temporary migration to

4 See Helena Colcannon, *The Poor Clares in Ireland (A.D. 1629–A.D. 1929)* (Dublin: Gill and Son, 1929), 50.

4 On Browne, see Marie-Louise Coolahan, ‘Mary Browne’, *Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/queens.ezp1.qub.ac.uk/view/article/105827>> (accessed 13 June 2016).

6 Mary Bonaventure Browne, Third Abbess of Galway, *Recollections of an Irish Poor Clare in the Seventeenth Century*, ed., with a foreword, by Celsus O’Brien (Galway: Poor Clare Sisters, 1993). All subsequent references to Browne’s account are to this edition. The original Irish account, presumed destroyed during the siege of Galway by the Williamite army in 1691, is understandably considered a very great loss by Irish scholars. See Celsus O’Brien, *A Short History of The Poor Clares, Galway* (1992), 7–8, available at <<http://www.poorclares.ie/print/poorclarehistory.pdf>> (accessed 14 March 2015). O’Brien draws upon the work of Colcannon, *The Poor Clares in Ireland*.

7 Ciaran O’Scea acknowledges Spain as an enabling context for female immigrants, pointing to a revolution in Irish female literacy in the Irish community in La Coruña in the first half of the seventeenth century. See ‘En busca de papeles: la transformación de la cultura oral de los inmigrantes irlandeses desde La Coruña hasta la Corte’, in *Las Actas del Congreso Irlanda y la Monarquía Hispánica: Kinsale, 1601–2001. Guerra, política, exilio, y religión*, ed. Enrique García Hernán *et al.* (Madrid: Univ. de Alcalá, 2002), 359–80.

scholarly and religious centres [and] [...] state-sponsored and sometimes forced migration, carried out mainly by the Cromwellian authorities'.⁸ Women writers moving between Ireland and Spain in this period represent a fascinating mix of all four of these motivating drives. The movement of elite women to Spain from Ireland is testified to not just in the relocations of Fanshawe, but also in the movement of such women as Catherine Magennis, wife to the Earl of Tyrone, who found herself in Spain in the wake of the 'Flight of the Earls' to the continent.⁹ Migration of a more openly religious cast took a variety of forms, and, as well as records of payments by the Spanish monarchy to the Poor Clares in Spain, there is archival evidence of 1652 payments to exiled Dominican nuns in their Bilbao convent.¹⁰ At least from the early seventeenth century, moreover, Irish women gravitated to Spain for political reasons and, in the aftermath of the Cromwellian conquest in Ireland, swelled existing numbers of the migrant population. Hence, the petitions composed, often with the aid of an amanuensis or an interpreter, by the widows, wives and daughters of Irish soldiers recruited into the Spanish armies, regularly speak of want and destitution. So conceived as to support the Counter-Reformation cause, these pleas for succour from Irish women living in Spain are revealing documents in the extent to which they deploy standard rhetorical tropes and a gendered language of economic suffering. The textual legacy of Fanshawe and Browne suggests they are exemplary of that much larger constituency of women who left seventeenth-century Ireland only to find that Spain functioned as a creative spur to their imaginations.

Traditionally, Fanshawe's and Browne's texts have been read as seminal contributions to the female literary tradition. Both writers are most often situated alongside the writing activities of their female peers and regarded as indicative of certain tendencies in national culture. For example, Fanshawe is usually discussed within the context of writings by elite English women. Hence, her *Memoirs* are generally explored in terms of other English Civil War works by women such as Margaret Cavendish, Lucy Hutchinson

8 Igor Pérez Tostado, *Irish Influence at the Court of Spain in the Seventeenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2008), 177.

9 Marie-Louise Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language in Early Modern Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 2010), 103, 128.

10 The database 'Misión de Irlanda' collates archival material related to Irish military and domestic migration, including petitions from and records of payment to Irish women. A 1652 directive from Philip IV orders the payment of the upkeep of three refugee Poor Clare nuns who have arrived from Ireland, to allow their entry into a convent in Madrid (Base de Datos Misión de Irlanda, 2407). A further document refers to financial support for the refugee Franciscan nuns in exile from Ireland (on the understanding that masses are said/sung for the King's intentions). In 1652 we find a further note of payment for the upkeep of thirteen Irish Dominican nuns in Bilbao, housed in the Convento de Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación, as well as a note of payment for the upkeep of two Irish nuns ('Obreyn') in <<http://www.irishinspain.es/irlandeses/presentacion.php>> (accessed 18 March 2015).

and Anne Halkett.¹¹ One effect of this is that the Spanish sections of Fanshawe's memoirs have been almost wholly ignored, with the notable exception of an article by Madeline Bassnett which examines the writer's later period in Spain (1664–1666) in the light of her husband's diplomatic mission.¹² At the level of diplomacy, the later period in Spain is undoubtedly intriguing, but we want to argue here that a richer and more illuminating engagement with Spain and Spanish culture is suggested in Fanshawe's earlier and almost wholly neglected—1649—trip. Similarly, Browne's work, originally written in Irish, is invariably assessed in relation to other contemporary writings by Irish women, particularly those Irish women who entered Spanish convents as nuns or *beatas* in the early modern period. Marie-Louise Coolahan's highly enriching study, *Women, Writing and Language in Early Modern Ireland*, is illustrative of the advantages of this approach, although we will argue in this discussion for the additional possibilities of a multi-generic and transnational paradigm.¹³ While projects seeking to address the absence of women from cultural and scholarly sites of memory have flourished in the fields of Hispanic Studies and Irish Studies in recent years, these complementary lines of inquiry have rarely been placed into dialogue. By aligning explorations of Fanshawe and Browne, and by recovering a material network of interactions between two different locales and cultures, we develop in this article a gendered perspective on the experience of Irish women within the Spanish early modern world. This article considers the ways in which Browne's endeavours as a writer emerge from, and are authorized by, her move to a religious community in Spain. Browne's writing in Spain is marked by its receptivity, and, in references to nuns' deaths and the signs of sanctity, it is possible to discern the influence and imprint of the host culture. Fanshawe, of course, was not part of a religious community, but she was, while in Spain, an active member of a household, and, in her memoirs, a comparable experience of exposure to local influence is visible. As this article demonstrates, in Fanshawe's reflections on her Spanish travels and in her inscription of Spanish cooking recipes, a heightened responsiveness to local *mores*—that makes itself felt in her writing activity—is evident. In situating Fanshawe and Browne inside Spanish contexts, the article also considers the determining function of particular Iberian spaces. Recent feminist-oriented discussions in Hispanic Studies, for instance, have spotlighted the productive role of the conventual space—Electa Arenal's and Stacy Schlauf's study, “Leyendo yo y escribiendo

11 See, for example: Mary Beth Rose, *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature* (Chicago/London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002), 65–70; Sharon Cadman Seelig, *Autobiography and Gender in Early Modern Literature: Reading Women's Lives, 1600–1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 2006), 90–109.

12 Madeline Bassnett, “‘All the ceremonyes and civilityes’: The Authorship of Diplomacy in the Memoirs of Ann, Lady Fanshawe”, *Seventeenth Century*, 26:1 (2011), 94–118.

13 Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language*.

ella”: The Convent As Intellectual Community’, is a pivotal case in point, focusing, as it does, on the notion of collaborative intellectual work made possible by the convent community.¹⁴ A ‘Boom’ in women’s writing in Spanish and Spanish-American contexts is even suggested by Lisa Vollendorf, contrasting a relative dearth in the sixteenth century with a perceived abundance in the seventeenth.¹⁵ In the case-studies with which we are concerned, particular Iberian spaces are the precondition for textual reproduction and representation.

Arguing for Spain as an enabling context for women’s writing—a creative space within which alternative alliances and identifications might be established—this article offers a corrective to studies which tend to see women’s writing as functioning mainly inside national boundaries. By contrast, our discussion attempts to establish connections between women; collapsing more familiar categories of ‘travel’, ‘recusancy’, ‘religion’ and ‘politics’ has the virtue of allowing flux, exchange, cross-fertilization and movement to act as motors for an alternative form of enquiry. In so doing, this article in part aligns itself with what Ciaran Brady describes as ‘a major revolution’ in how early modern Irish history is studied. If previously attention was focused on the ‘significance of [...] developments in England for the changing attitudes and actions of the English in Ireland’, more recently the critical focus has become more European in orientation. As a result, there has been a ‘revival of interest in the character and course of the Irish engagement with early modern Europe’.¹⁶ Within this revival, as evidenced by a plethora of new studies, relations between Ireland and Spain have proved particularly fruitful areas of enquiry.¹⁷ But, notably, little of this work is gendered in content or approach. Despite Óscar Recio Morales’ acknowledgement—in parentheses—that ‘the story of Irish migration in

14 Electa Arenal & Stacy Schlau, “‘Leyendo yo y escribiendo ella’: The Convent As Intellectual Community’, *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, 13:1 (1989), 214–29. See also, by the same authors, ~~see also~~ *Untold Sisters: Hispanic Nuns in Their Own Words*, trans. Amanda Powell (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1989). For an overview of recent scholarship of conventual literatura, see Nieves Baranda Leturio & María Carmen Marín Pina, ‘El universo de la escritura conventual femenina’, in *Letras en la celda: cultura escrita de los conventos femeninos en la España moderna* (Madrid: Iberoamericana/Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 2014), 11–45.

15 Lisa Vollendorf, ‘Transatlantic Ties: Women’s Writing in Iberia and the Americas’, in *Women, Religion, and the Atlantic World, 1600–1800*, ed. Daniella Kostrom & Lisa Vollendorf (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2009), 79–112. For the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century precursors of said ‘Boom’, see Anne J. Cruz, ‘Willing Desire: Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza and Feminine Subjectivity’, in *The Mendoza Women: Gender and Power in Golden Age Spain*, ed. Helen Nader (Champaign/Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2003), 177–94.

16 Ciaran Brady, ‘Foreword’, in Óscar Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish Empire, 1600–1825* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010), ix–xii (p. ix).

17 See, for example, Eduardo de Mesa, *The Irish in the Spanish Armies in the Seventeenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014).

Spain is not resolutely male', the woman's part is notably lacking in his otherwise full and impressive history.¹⁸ Similarly, Eduardo de Mesa's study, *The Irish in the Spanish Armies*, is distinctive for including no material on the women who would have undoubtedly followed Irish soldiers to Spanish climes.¹⁹ This article aims to redress this imbalance, and to populate a critical lacuna, by interweaving case-studies of two very different women writers who pursue similar geographical routes to change their personal circumstances, moving between Ireland and Spain in the mid seventeenth century.

2 Ireland, Recollection, Loss

The first community of Irish Poor Clares was established in Dublin, 1629, but the nuns trace their origins to the monastery of Gravelines, founded in 1609, primarily for English girls willing to pursue their vocation abroad. Irish young women also appear to have made the journey, however, since by 1625 the records show four Irish nuns amidst their number. Following their expulsion from Dublin by civil authorities in 1630 they established a residence in Ballinaclyffey, near Athlone, christened 'Bethlehem' by the nuns themselves. In spite of unfavourable conditions, this period is presented by Browne as a 'Golden Age' for the community and their numbers swelled—it was here that Browne herself would enter in 1632 with her sister Catherine. While at Bethlehem Browne was already engaged in the commissioning of scholarly work, seeking translations for the use of the sisters. Brother Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, the most famous of the annalists known as the Four Masters, spent eleven years in Ireland between 1626 and 1637, locating and copying manuscripts. During this time Browne had him correct and transcribe a translation of the *Rule of St Clare* from English into Irish for the nuns at Bethlehem. O'Brien notes that she also had the *Testament and Blessing of St Clare* and the constitutions of St Colette translated into Irish by Dualtach Mac Fírbisigh. Further documentary evidence from Browne's time in Ireland is scant—O'Brien notes a letter to the mayor of Galway from 1648 in which Browne objects to the 'exorbitant rent', yet observes that 'we hear nothing more from our author until she put pen to paper in far-off Spain', thus the order's 'Golden Age' is retrospectively re-imagined in the Iberian peninsula. It was from their new base in Galway, established in 1642, that members of this spiritual community would be forced into exile in 1653. Priests, and religious women, who left the country in response to the Cromwellian edicts, were given from three to five weeks to prepare to go into exile.²⁰ In her recreation of this period, Browne tellingly highlights an event

18 Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish Empire, 1600–1825*, 6.

19 See above note 15.

20 Celsus O'Brien, 'Foreword', in Mary Bonaventure Browne, Third Abbess of Galway, *Recollections of an Irish Poor Clare in the Seventeenth Century*, ed., with a foreword, by Celsus

read as a premonition of displacement and dispersal, even as it affirms the holiness of a member of the order, Martha Mariana Cheevers, who had led a group to Wexford:

Some three years after her death, her grave opened of its own accord, namely, in the summer before Cromwell captured Wexford, the first place he took in Ireland [...] her body was as white and fresh as when she was buried [...] the holy martyr father Raymond, said it was an omen of some great tribulation to come.²¹ (9–11)

Evidence of Mother Browne's own erudition is signalled in a record preserved in the Galway monastery archives, cited by the Poor Clare Historian Celsus O'Brien, Browne is described as

[...] prudent and wise, well spoken in English, Irish and Spanish. [...] shee left a brave cronicle written under her one hand, which shee sent to this convent of Saint Clare of Gallway, and a Remonastrance, a chalise, a holy curious Relick, many pictures, books, ornaments, and other fine things fitting for the Allter and devine service, all the aforesaid things now lost and burnt in the later warrs Anno 1691.²²

This description points to a dispersed material legacy, revealing Browne's continued affinity with her native land and the sisters there. Following the siege, the Irish sisters 'sought a haven in foreign countries where 'they might enjoy the sweet presence of their heavenly spouse whom they longed for [...] they had heard that any member of their order coming to Spain would be accommodated in convents' (12). Indeed, as noted above, the Spanish king provided a fixed income for their maintenance. Cristina Bravo Lozano has examined the evolution of this income from 1652 to 1706, and notes that both Mary and Catherine were received by a local bishop upon their arrival at Caballero de Gracia in 1652.²³

In a richly suggestive parallel history, Fanshawe, too, was to find her Irish experience riven with instabilities and uncertainties. It was in 1649 that, a few months after the execution of Charles I and just before the launch

O'Brien (Galway: Poor Clare Sisters, 1993), i–iii. Subsequent references to Mother Browne's writings are to this edition unless specified otherwise. References will be given parenthetically.

²¹ See also Coolahan, p. 92

²² O'Brien dates this record at 1694 in the Foreword to *Recollections*, p. 3.

²³ Colcannon, *The Poor Clares in Ireland*, 52. We are grateful to Dr Cristina Bravo Lozano for the reference. See her forthcoming article, Cristina Bravo Lozano, ' "Huyendo de los lobos carniceros de su patria". Las monjas irlandesas en Castilla, una aproximación social y discursiva (1652–1706)', *Hispania Sacra* (in press). Although not explicitly concerned with the Irish women, Angela Atienza, *Tiempo de conventos: una historia social de las fundaciones en la España moderna* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2008) considers the socio-political context of the convents during the period.

of Cromwell's Irish campaign, Fanshawe's husband was sent—at the request of the exiled Charles II—to Ireland, the purpose of which was to 'to receive such monies as Prince Rupert could raise by the fleet he then commanded'.²⁴ The prose is economically worded, but the facts are clear: Fanshawe is caught between conditions and countries, driven to extremities in the aftermath of the fall of the monarchy and beholden to now dispersed representatives of authority. The situation is clarified in reflections on her own itinerancy: 'my husband sen[t] for me [...] Thither [to Ireland] we went' (51), she states. As is characteristic, Fanshawe's account strives to sound notes of hope in the midst of adversity. The failed 'design' of Prince Rupert, for example, is assessed as having 'a very good aspect at the beginning', while, *en route* to Ireland, Fanshawe discovers comfort in being guided 'cheerfully towards my North Star' (51) in an approximation that elides the geographical coordinates of her journey with the anticipation of seeing her husband again. This is all despite the fact that, in Ireland, there was much to fear. As is clear, the dominant threat is from Cromwell—he is described as 'hotly march[ing] over Ireland' (53), an association which conjures intemperance, tyranny and even the plague. Anti-Cromwellian references, indeed, are consistently to the fore, with Cromwell being typically discovered in oppositional terms; he 'went through as bloodily as victoriously, many worthy persons [...] murdered in cold blood, and their families quite ruined' (57), Fanshawe states. The equation of blood and victory undermines the latter, and a similar dismantlement is engineered through the juxtaposition of nobility and innocence ('worthy') with the summary execution of punishment ('cold blood'). If only sub-textually, the loss of 'families' is realized as a type of desecration, as a loss that affects the country's oldest structures and institutions. The state of affairs is pithily summed up: 'that brave Kingdom [had] fallen in six or eight months into a most miserable sad condition' (62). True to her royalist credentials, Fanshawe envisages Ireland as a 'Kingdom' that, like England, is ravaged in the political maelstrom.

As Marie-Louise Coolahan notes, when the English garrison in Cork rose up to join with the parliamentary forces, Fanshawe was residing in the city and, hence, found herself at the centre of the rebellion.²⁵ Such were the reverberations of the rebellion that Fanshawe was to be tested in her points of reference and areas of alliance. For example, in a readjustment to her identifications, Fanshawe empathizes with the native Irish population: 'Hearing lamentable shrieks of men and women and children, I asked [...] the cause. They told me they were all Irish, stripped and wounded, turned out of the town' (53), she notes. The plight of displacement depicted here allows Fanshawe a sense of the fragility of her own domestic circumstances.

24 *The Memoirs of Ann, Lady Fanshawe*, ed. Herbert Charles Fanshawe (London: John Lane/Bodley Head, 1907), 51. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Fanshawe are taken from this edition and appear parenthetically.

25 Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language*, 252.

It is this recognition of her comparable predicament that prompts her to warn her absent husband, to gather up her children, her husband's writings and other 'household stuff' (54), and to relocate to Kinsale. The night-time flight is characterized as a 'wonderful escape' (55), the language underscoring a connection between Fanshawe and the fleeing townspeople. Coolahan writes that, for Fanshawe, 'political, rather than ethnic or even religious, allegiance' was what 'mattered', and, in Fanshawe's recollection, it is the forces that bind Irish Catholics and expatriate English—at this historically particular and locally determined point—that make for the dominant impression.²⁶ In Ireland, indeed, Fanshawe finds a place of affinity ('we began to think of making our abode there' [52], she comments), and it is a construction of Ireland born out of the experience of a common enemy (Cromwell) if not a common cause.

The notion that Fanshawe sees her own fate as bound up with that of the Catholic Irish is crystallized in the reported account of Cromwell's response to the family's flight. He:

[...] demanded where [Richard Fanshawe's] papers and his family were [...] [the rebels] all stared one at another, but made no reply. Their general said, 'It was as much worth to have seized his papers as the Town; for I did make account of them to have known what these parts of the country were worth'. (55–56)

Through the recorded interrogation, Fanshawe presents herself as working successfully to interrupt Cromwell's war, a further suggestion of her connection to the Irish people being registered in the equal stress placed on the fates of Cork and Richard Fanshawe's papers. In this retrospective construction of an encounter only available to Fanshawe at second or third hand, she becomes a proxy embodiment of resistance to the conquest.

Where Ireland is imagined as increasingly at the mercy of despotism, Spain is conjured as holding out the imagined possibility of an alternative political dispensation. In the memoir, Ann describes the decision, after the flight from Cork, to decamp to Galway (at this time plague-ridden) as one taken 'by force and not by choice' (59). Encapsulated here is a vivid sense of a family pushed one way and another by external determinants. Accordingly, Spain presents itself as a much safer and more attractive prospect; 'your father, hearing [of] [...] a great ship [...] bound for Malaga in Spain, and Cromwell pursuing his conquest at our backs, resolved to fall into the hands of God rather than into the hands of men' (59), Fanshawe writes. Spain, then, is represented as providing a route out of and away from the tyranny and oppression of the rampaging general, and, acknowledging her lack of agency, Fanshawe sees the move as practical necessity. But there are deeper currents

²⁶ Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language*, 252.

running beneath the decision, as pointed up in the emotive tenor of Fanshawe's projections. As Sharon Cadman Seelig writes: 'Fanshawe [...] expresses a good deal of enthusiasm for Spain', an insight that Coolahan elaborates: Fanshawe is 'conscious' of the ties that bind 'England and Spain', to the extent that she 'glosses over internal ethnic tensions'.²⁷ Inherent in Fanshawe's writing, in fact, is a sense of national-cultural consanguinity. An early suggestion comes when Fanshawe observes, commenting on Ireland, 'the natives seem to me a very loving people to each other, and constantly false to strangers, the Spaniards only excepted' (63). At this point, Fanshawe suggests that the Irish, possessed of a rare national loyalty and integrity, form a natural allegiance only with Spanish compatriots. Her formulation works both to justify her separation from the worst excesses of English Protestantism and to make palatable, through an affirmation of the Irish, one of England's traditional—Catholic—adversaries. The Spanish-Irish dynamic makes for an exclusive relationship, it is suggested, the countries coming together in an organic partnership.

Perhaps most influential in the choice of Spain as a destination-point was the fact that Fanshawe's husband was a Hispanophile. Undoubtedly, Richard Fanshawe, with whom, according to all accounts, Ann shared a happy marriage, was a major factor in the *mentalité* of *rapprochement* she entertained.²⁸ A writer, translator and diplomat with an exceptionally high regard for Spanish culture, Richard Fanshawe had travelled in Spain in the early 1630s and spoke both Spanish and Portuguese fluently. 'Educated English people learnt to read Spanish [...] they collected Spanish books by theologians [...] writers of fiction [...] sailors and scientists', writes John Stoye, 'but it never seems to have been generally assumed that Spanish, unlike French or Italian, was a language that gentlemen should learn to speak'.²⁹ Richard Fanshawe was an exception to the rule, and it was no doubt because of his linguistic proficiency that he was appointed secretary to the English Ambassador to Madrid in 1635. Raised in a household which cultivated the arts, Richard Fanshawe gravitated to translation, working at different times on translations of Góngora and Argensola, Spanish historians and poets. Stylistically, his translations are described as 'remarkable: the baroque of the Spanish golden age elicits an answering baroque diction from Fanshawe', Peter Davidson writes.³⁰ Translation work punctuated Richard

27 Seelig, *Autobiography and Gender in Early Modern Literature*, 106; Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language*, 255.

28 On Richard Fanshawe, his love of Spanish literature and participation in Spanish literary networks, see: Eduardo R. del Rio, 'The Context of Translation: Richard Fanshawe and Spanish Verse', *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 17 (2004), 6–43; Roger M. Walker, 'A Rediscovered Seventeenth-Century Literary Friendship: Sir Richard Fanshawe and Dom Francisco Manuel de Melo', *Seventeenth Century*, 7:1 (1992), 15–26.

29 Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667*, 235–36.

30 Peter Davidson, 'Fanshawe, Sir Richard', *Dictionary of National Biography*,

Fanshawe's political career, and, with this in mind, one might speculate that Ann assisted in various capacities. Certainly, she arranged for the publication of some of Richard's final works, translations of Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza's Spanish court comedies, *Querer por solo querer* (1670) and *Fiestas de Aranjuez* (1671), seeing in them a posthumous memorial to her husband's literary achievement.³¹

In this connection, the ways in which Fanshawe describes the sea passage to Spain is arresting. 'Here now our scene was shifted from land to sea' (62), she states, suggesting a familiarity with dramatic technique and her own adoption of the role of chorus. Tellingly, the memoir self-consciously eases the transition from Ireland to Spain through a theatrical representation of turns in fortune; the use of the term, 'shifted', underlines the play-like qualities of Fanshawe's migratory experience. Markedly, the account of the voyage is animated by familiar figurations of character and situation—a 'most tempestuous master, a Dutchman' (63), and an aggressively advancing 'Turkish galley' (63)—but, rather than Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *Othello* being suggested, the closer analogue would seem to be the 'transvestite drama' of the so-called seventeenth-century Spanish *comedia nueva*. Unlike Shakespearean drama, in which a boy impersonates a woman impersonating a man, the *comedia nueva* favours an alternative scenario, that of the *disfraz varonil*, whereby a female actress takes the part of a woman who dresses as a man for purposes of subterfuge, pursuit and escape. In plays by dramatists such as Lope de Vega and Tirso de Molina, as Amy L. Tigner argues, the cross-dressed heroine, played by an actress of singular 'virtuosity', uses 'creative stratagems' and a 'facility with language' to gain 'authority [...] agency' and 'independence', thereby effecting 'subtle power negotiations within the culture'.³²

Such is the plot rehearsed in the memoir; locked up below (women on board would confirm the ship as a trading rather than a military vessel), Fanshawe deploys linguistic improvisation ('I all in tears desired him to be so good'), commercial ingenuity ('I gave him half-a-crown') and sartorial invention (she changes places with the 'cabin-boy' and dresses in his 'blue thrum-cap [...] and [...] tarred coat' [64]) to bring about a change in her circumstances. So attired, she is able to move, like any Spanish dramatic heroine, from private to public, from closed to open, and from low to high, appearing on deck alongside her husband. The ruse fools the Turks, who

<<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9146>> (accessed 6 May 2015).

31 'Richard Fanshawe', NNDB: Tracking the Entire World, <<http://www.nndb.com/people/223/000101917>> (accessed 15 March 2016).

32 See Merveena McKendrick's now classic study of the *mujer varonil*, *Women and Society in the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age: A Study of the 'mujer varonil'* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1974). See also Amy L. Tigner, 'The Spanish Actress's Art: Improvisation, Transvestism, and Disruption in Tirso's *El vergonzoso en palacio*', *Early Theatre*, 15:1 (2012), 167–90 (pp. 167, 168, 173, 174).

proceed on their way, with Fanshawe, mirroring an archetypal dramatic plot, being emancipated in the process: 'I stood [...] as free from sickness and fear as, I confess, from discretion' (64), she observes, with a more than a hint of self-congratulation. It is possible that, at some level, Richard Fanshawe's cultivation of all things literary and Spanish resonated with his wife in this climactic episode. Certainly, Fanshawe was to take considerable interest in the drama of the Spanish theatre—and women's receptivity to it—for, as a later entry on the Spanish 'nation' (166) confirms, 'women [...] delight much in [...]. stage plays' (168).

3 Fanshawe, Creativity, Spain

If Ireland was to stimulate in Fanshawe psychic revisionism, Spain was to continue the process. Hinting at divine support, Fanshawe perceives the arrival in Malaga after her journey as a deliverance 'from the sword and the plague' (64). In a knowing allusion to Ezekiel 7:15, Fanshawe analogizes internal afflictions (the Galway plague) and an external onslaught (Cromwell) to suggest salvation, the successful sea-crossing being read in terms of a wonderful intervention ('we trusted to [...] providence' [65]). Most obviously here, invoking the conditions in the Ireland she has left behind, she implicitly identifies with Irish *émigrés* who have also relocated to Spain. However, for Fanshawe, 'land[ing] [...] in Malaga, very well, and full content' (64) prompts mixed emotions, since she simultaneously lives 'in hope that we should one day return happily to our own country' (64–65). Such a dual registration of displacement—on the one hand, relief at arrival, and, on the other hand, a desire to go back—is, of course, not untypical of the Irish *émigré* experience.

Alighting in Malaga, the Fanshawes proceeded onwards to Madrid, stopping *en route* at 'Velez Malaga' and then Granada. Strikingly, Fanshawe does not record the trials of the six-week journey, and this is particularly notable given the fact that she is heavily pregnant at the time. Yet rather than dwelling on difficulty she notes the sight of 'the highest mountains [...] the finest valley that can be possibly described, adorned with high trees, rich grass, and beautified with a large, deep, clear river' (65). The responsiveness to her surroundings suggests a sensibility attuned to appreciate the natural virtues of a new environment. In this, Fanshawe represents a counter-instance to the contemporary English traveller who, discouraged by 'the discomfort, the poverty, which affected the state of the inns and roads, [and] the [...] climate', excluded Spain from the European tour itinerary.³³ Fanshawe goes on to offer a vibrantly rendered first-hand description of the Alhambra. While the Moorish palace featured in seventeenth-century travelogues—John Howell describes it in 1662 as a '*glorious piece*', while Edmund Bohun in 1693 portrays an 'extreamly Magnificent' edifice with 'a

33 Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604–1667*, 235.

delightful Prospect’—a general lack of specificity usually obtained.³⁴ In contrast, Fanshawe conjures the Alhambra in detail as a ‘goodly vast palace [...] whose buildings are [...] adorned with vast quantities of jasper stone, many courts [...] fountains [...] gardens, with ponds [...] baths made of jasper, and [...] rooms roofed with [...] mosaic work which exceeds the finest enamel’ (66). Only pages earlier, the memoir describes Cromwellian Ireland via scenes of sacking, emptied towns and a landscape of ‘dung, dirt, and rags’ (60), and it is possibly this recent exposure to a ruined Ireland that prompts in Fanshawe a sensitivity to the Alhambra’s extraordinary aesthetics. Overlapping realms of Irish-Spanish experience generate contemplation and reflection.

Even in the seventeenth century, the Alhambra was remarkable because of its state of beauteous preservation (a further contrast with an Ireland in the throes of despoliation). A set of keys carved in stone above the main entry (the so-called ‘Justice Tower’) catches Fanshawe’s attention. Beneath the keys is a hand, similarly carved, and a ‘motto’, which Fanshawe carefully transcribes, thereby bringing the discourses of Muslim Spain into her orbit of reference: ‘UNTIL THAT HAND HOLD THOSE KEYS THE CHRISTIANS SHALL NEVER POSSESS THIS ALHAMBRA’ (66). Modern-day understandings of these stony symbols aver that the hand represents the five precepts of Islam (divine unity, prayer, fasting, the giving of alms and pilgrimage) and the keys reference the power of Mohammed to open and close Heaven’s gates.³⁵ By contrast, Fanshawe is taken far more with the text (now lost) accompanying these motifs. She understands the motto as a preventative measure, a mantra that wards off the inconceivable: its logic centres on the ‘impossibility’ that the hands and keys ‘should meet’ (66). As the detail that the ‘motto’ represents a ‘prophecy’ (66) indicates, Fanshawe seems drawn to the riddle- or *Macbeth*-like nature of the motto’s assurance; as in Shakespeare’s play, the unthinkable contains a ‘truth’. For, as the Alhambra that Fanshawe visited would have made abundantly clear, the ‘goodly [...] palace’ (65) did of course cede place to Christian powers, the period of Moorish rule in Spain coming to an end by the close of the fifteenth century.³⁶ Indeed, Fanshawe goes on to tell the story of the Alhambra from a Spanish perspective:

34 James Howell, *A New English Grammar* (London, 1662; Wing H3095), 43, 45; Edmund Bohun, *A Geographical Dictionary* (London, 1693; Wing B3454), 173.

35 See ‘Entering the Alhambra’, <<http://www.spainthenandnow.com>> (accessed 15 March 2016) and ‘Justice Tower’, <<http://www.alhambra degrenada.org>> (accessed 15 March 2015). The Alhambra, and the ‘Justice Tower’, were first popularly investigated in Washington Irving, *Tales of the Alhambra* (New York/New Orleans: University Publishing Company, 1901), 13–14.

36 On the history of Islam in Spain, see Richard A. Fletcher, *Moorish Spain* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: Univ. of California Press, 2006), 5–13.

It happened that when the Moors were besieged in that place by Don Fernando and his Queen Isabella, the King [...] shooting the first arrow, as their custom is, cut the part of stone that held the keys, which was in the fashion of a chain; and the keys falling remained in the hand underneath. This strange accident preceded but a few days the conquest of the town of Granada and kingdom. (66–67)

Interestingly, a heroic Spanish narrative, inflected by Moorish lore, here makes its way into Fanshawe's English language memoirs.³⁷ This is clearly a history which she is at pains to pass on. Not so much portraying the situation of the 'other', Fanshawe implicitly endorses the master-account of Spanish imperialism, pointing up in so doing her immersion in fresh conditions and climes. But this is no simple reinforcement of a Christian paradigm of redemption or a straightforward approval of the *Reconquista*; rather, Fanshawe's position is one of sober moralizing, as illustrated in her gnomic remark, 'see how true [it is that] there is a time for all things' (66). In this expression of philosophical fatalism, Fanshawe recognizes that even the most permanent of institutions are subject to flux; in the Alhambra's declining status, she possibly sees a parallel with the institutions of the country she has vacated and her own predicament in exile.

That story which Fanshawe elects to tell, then, concerns warnings, superstition (it is 'strange') and coincidence (the 'accident' or timing of an arrow being shot that happens to bring the hand and keys into alignment). In this connection, it is revealing that the other anecdote Fanshawe chooses to relate from Spanish-Moorish history centres on an 'iron gate', which, we are informed, 'tradition says [...] could never be opened since the Moors left [...] several persons had endeavoured to wrench it open; but they perished in the attempt' (67). On the one hand, the underpinning context is political; Fanshawe, putting her ear to the key-hole, hears 'a clashing of arms [and] [...] shrill noises' in such a way as to recall the Irish interlude (the ghosts of the siege of Granada and the delayed trauma of the siege of Cork are fleetingly interwoven). On the other hand, the context is supernatural—magic inhabits the sounds on the gate's other side, and the Alhambra is accordingly reified if not romanticized. Although Fanshawe eventually settles on an open verdict ('The truth of this I can say no more to, but that there is such a gate, and I have seen it' [67]) by seeking to ground the fable in the material, the account still invites comparison with her observations on the Irish banshee, an 'apparition [...] [in] the shape of a woman' (58–59), glimpsed during her stay with Lady Honora O'Brien just before the Spanish passage. Both Spanish and Irish cultures, it is suggested, are constituted by

37 On the re-invention of the recent past, see also A. Katie Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins U. P., 2007).

means of a reliance on superstition, and, arguably, Fanshawe is responsive because she recognizes connections that cut across national categories. Interestingly, Mother Browne also records experiences of apparitions, and, as in Fanshawe's memoirs, in which the phantom 'woman' signifies a dying cousin, her ghostly visitations appear as symptoms of an imminent death.

A further indication of Fanshawe's absorption in the Alhambra is her entertainment of a sense of religious difference and tolerance. The intricacies of Islamic art are of particular interest, with Fanshawe noticing 'an exceeding large piece of rich embroidery made by the Moors of Granada [...] half a yard of the true Tyrian dye [...] so glorious a colour that it cannot be expressed [...] so bright that when the eye is removed upon any other object it seems as white as snow' (66). Self-evidently, the artefact is appealing in its remarkable character and effects: it is beyond conventional measures, pushes at the limits of Fanshawe's cultural knowledge, and excites her powers of perception. Similarly, Fanshawe is entranced by 'magnificent [...] figures of forest work, in which the Moors did transcend' (66). If, elsewhere, Fanshawe's imagination is ignited by the textual manifestations of her environment, here it is the visual that holds sway, not least in the eulogy to indigenous arts incomparable in their accomplishment. As Fanshawe admires the creations of an Islamic-Spanish heritage, so is she herself steered into the activity of thinking and writing.

Reaching Madrid, there was cause for other kinds of reflection. Arriving there in 1650, Fanshawe 'was delivered of my first daughter that was called Elizabeth, upon the 13th of Ju[ne]' (67). One can only speculate about how the journey from Galway had affected the pregnancy and delivery, but the memoir is clear with the stark facts: '[Elizabeth] lived but fifteen days, and lies buried in the chapel of the French hospital' (67). Sharon Cadman Seelig notes that, in the memoir, miscarriages and the death of children 'receive only cursory notice'.³⁸ Details of place, however, invite a more intricate interpretation. Given that the chapel was almost certainly Catholic, it might be suggested that, in the burial accorded her daughter, Fanshawe was once again expressing an alliance, as she had done in Ireland, with a religion that lay outside her Protestant frame of reference. Such a connection with a sense of place was not available to Ann's husband. Richard Fanshawe was unable to secure a Spanish audience for the royalist cause; as Fanshawe records, he 'had great difficulty [in] [...] the performance of his master's commands' (68). By this time, a new set of Anglo-Spanish relations were being pursued, the Spanish government having changed tack and initiated negotiations with Cromwell himself. As Igor Pérez Tostado notes: 'The harsh reality was that the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland led to the darkest period of Hiberno-Spanish relations during the whole century [...] [with] arguments of self-

38 Seelig, *Autobiography and Gender in Early Modern Literature*, 102.

interest and altruism painfully turned against Irish Catholic interests'.³⁹ The failure of the royalist initiative resulted in the decision to leave Spain; in the autumn of 1650, the Fanshawes travelled to San Sebastián and from there to Paris and Calais, Ann Fanshawe then travelling alone to London. At a political level, Irish-Spanish interactions had foundered, Ann Fanshawe discovering in Madrid a growing estrangement from national priorities. Her entertainment of Spain as an alternative focus for her energies, and, crucially, as a site that, in the context of her Irish experience, was to prompt her into artistic production, was to prove fleeting.

However, this was not the last occasion on which the Spanish and Irish directions of the memoirs intersected. The body of Elizabeth remained in Madrid, and Fanshawe's writing suggests a continuing spiritual investment in the country to which she had been forced to flee. When, in the mid 1670s, Fanshawe completed her memoirs, she appended a list of children born and lost.⁴⁰ There is no personalized description of Elizabeth; rather, the child is registered only in relation to place, the city, the street ('Santa Barbara'), the 'lodgings' (215) and the burial site. Preparing the way for Mother Browne who, in exile in Spain, writes of the incorruptible bodies of her deceased sisters, Fanshawe finds closure through compiling a list of children which is creatively indivisible from her own itinerant trajectories.⁴¹ Moreover, Spanish influences were also in evidence when, back in England in December 1651, Fanshawe returned to another writerly activity, a recipe or household book. This manuscript volume (it remains unpublished) is a bulky and ornate folio, once boasting a brass clasp, the title page of which carries the proud identifier, 'Mrs Fanshawes Booke of Receipts of Physickes, Salues, Waters, Cordialls, Preserues and Cookery'. Most intriguingly for our purposes, the volume was begun soon after returning from Spain. Perhaps Fanshawe was fired to conceive of it through an internalization of Spanish domesticity. Certainly, Spain leaps forcefully from its pages. David B. Goldstein argues that 'the book was probably viewed as both a formal and a functional object, meant to be admired, treasured, but also used', spotlighting in particular systems of 'indebtedness [which] provide an amplified example of the developing convention of the recipe attribution'.⁴² But what is missing in this assessment is the status of the volume as an alternative memoir, a mode of memorializing with a distinctively Spanish flavour; Fanshawe records thanks not simply for culinary wisdoms but also for an enriching and non-

39 Tostado, *Irish Influence at the Court of Spain*, 181.

40 This 'Appendix' is printed in the 1907 edition of the *Memoirs* (214–17), but does not appear in *The Memoirs of Anne, Lady Halkett, and Ann, Lady Fanshawe*, ed. John Loftis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979).

41 See Coolahan, *Women, Writing, and Language*, 95.

42 David B. Goldstein, *Eating and Ethics in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 2013), 155.

English life encounter. Fanshawe's 'Booke', then, represents the Spanish experience in another key; it demonstrates commerce, exchange, cultural assimilation and imaginative engagement, and it traces a tripartite movement between Ireland, Spain and England that highlights the emancipatory effects of geographical displacement. Noticeable in the manuscript is the extent of Fanshawe's *appreciation* of Spanish cooking, for, as the recipe titles indicate—'Spanish creame', '*Olla podrida*' and '*Garamina de Leche Almendras*', for example—she had, thanks to her period in Spain, cultivated a deep awareness of local ingredients and specifically Spanish styles of food preparation.⁴³ Even the entries in Spanish suggest a love of Spanish conversation and vocabulary. Entries also point up hierarchies of discrimination in which English snobbery plays little part. 'The best Chocolate [...] of y^e Indes [...] is made [...] in Spaine' (f. 155^v), she remarks, stating elsewhere, 'Spanish Hypocrist [...] exceeds all other' (f. 85^r). Bringing to mind the rearrangement of attitudes and perceptions seen in other parts of the memoir, Fanshawe here elaborates a scale of value and taste in the light of her own biographical journey. Furthermore, the record of the origins of her recipes reveals an insight into the richly socialized Spanish world in which Fanshawe participated. An entry for 10 June 1650 details 'Francisco Morena's way of perfuming of Skinnes' (f. 82^v), suggesting contact, the swapping of ideas and a network of friends and acquaintances. If nothing else in Spain, Fanshawe seems to have been an observant interlocutor and an interested participant in an intercommunicative context.

Interestingly, in the 1664–65 entries, it is clear that, although time has marched on and Spanish society altered, some of the same—family—connections have been maintained. On 17 November 1664, Fanshawe transcribes a recipe 'To make the best Pastiles [incense] [...] in the world, taught me by a seruant of Franciscus Morenas, who was his nephew & came and made them in my house before me [...] at Madrid' (f. 84^r). The older Morena had died in the interval, but his nephew lives on as his uncle's culinary inheritor. The movement across generations works for the Fanshawes, too, and several recipes from the 1650s are reproduced—in another hand—in the 1660s. Almost certainly, this is the hand of Fanshawe's daughter, an indication of the extent to which Spanish cuisine passes from the mother to her children, widening knowledge of Spain in the process. Goldstein sees 'Fanshawe's collection' as 'clear evidence of a culture in which recipes were circulated much the way poems might be, within coteries of socially connected individuals', but the vital point is that this constituted a transnational modality of exchange.⁴⁴ Where Spain and Ireland forge a partnership through the memoir, in the cookery 'Booke' Spain and England

43 Wellcome Library, MS 7113, ff. 128^v, 154^v, 155^r. All further references to this manuscript appear in the text.

44 Goldstein, *Eating and Ethics in Shakespeare's England*, 155.

are tied together in a busy fraternization. Bringing the book back to England suggests that, for Fanshawe, Spain provided material legacies, traces of lived experience that could be revived and perpetuated in domestic praxis. The first—transitory—period in Spain survives and is revisited in the work that Fanshawe continues as mother, wife, translator, friend and social agent.

4 'The carnal and the imaginative': Mother Browne's Account

Browne endured a similarly treacherous journey, with one of her companions, sister Cecily Dillon dying on the boat just off the coast of Galicia—the Spanish authorities had delayed the landing for fear of the plague recalled by Fanshawe. None the less, the portion of the text concerning Mother Browne's own time in Spain is self-effacing; the emphasis rather on the documentation of the fate (and particularly the deaths) of her Poor Clare companions in exile. In 1654, Browne's own sister, Catherine Bernard Browne would pass away in the Conceptionist convent popularly known as the Caballero de Gracia in Madrid.⁴⁵ In fact Browne was said to have written a *Life* of her sister in English, now sadly lost.⁴⁶ The desire to capture, albeit *en breve*, the final days of her sister-nuns in Spain is a primary concern within the extant portion of Browne's narrative, although in its broader objective the literary endeavour does not fit neatly within the genre of hagiography.⁴⁷

45 The Caballero de Gracia convent was founded in 1603 by Mother Mary of St Paul de Ugarte. While officially it was consecrated to 'Jésus, María y José,' the name derived from a nobleman who built a church and some living quarters on the site. Mother Mary of St Paul took possession of the site on 5 January 1603. She founded the 'discalced' or 'recollect' Conceptionists, and because of the many convents she founded became known as *La Abuela*. Her remains are kept in an urn at the entrance to the choir along with those of Sr Catherine Browne. O'Brien refers here to 'Los monasterios de Conceptionistas Franciscanas en España', *Archivo Iberoamericano*, 51 (1991), 411–77, (p.453). This convent was demolished in the nineteenth century, and the nuns changed residence to Calle Blasco de Garay in 1891, bringing the body of the Irish refugee (said to be incorrupt to the present day) with them. The inscription on the sarcophagus notes her Irish origins 'de la noble ciudad de Galvia' (see *Recollections*, ed. O'Brien, 21).

46 In the foreword of the modern edition of the chronicle Celsus O'Brien provides a short extract: 'As regards the sister of this Venerable Mother Sister Catherine, called Sister Mary of Saint Bonaventure, of whom it is reported that she sent to her own country some of the veil and scapular of the body of her Venerable Sister, with which God has worked miracles. We can only say that she was the chronicler of her Venerable sister, writing her life in English, and that in this community she was a most exemplary religious in all virtues, keeping to herself, praying alone and in choir, without ever failing at the community exercise.' (p. 3 of the foreword)

⁴⁷ For Coolahan the chronicle situates itself 'primarily within the paradigm of chronicle writing.' Contrasting the account with male-authored perspectives on the war she notes that 'narrative endings are resolved in individual adherence to piety in exile.' Coolahan also underscores the presence of hagiographical conventions within the testimonial. See her chapter 'Irish Nun's Writing: The Poor Clares', in *Women, Writing and Language in Early Modern Ireland*, (Oxford University Press, 2010), 63-101 (particularly 95-97).

A number of hagiographical traditions none the less inform this aspect of Mother Browne's account—here we must acknowledge the enterprise of the Irish Franciscans at Louvain in the early seventeenth century. As mentioned above, Browne had already come into contact with members of this scholarly community while still in Ireland. Yet within the descriptions of the deaths of the individual members of the fragmented Poor Clare community, and Mother Browne's depiction of the evidence of the outward signs of their sanctity, we would suggest that the imprint of the host culture also becomes apparent.⁴⁸ The unique compositional circumstances of Mother's Browne's narrative see her move from one scholarly culture to another, into a seventeenth-century Spanish context wherein female authorship, although not unfettered, forms an accepted part of the spiritual life of lettered sisters. The paradox of freedom in enclosure is evoked by Julián Olivares and Elizabeth Boyce to introduce their 1993 anthology of female-authored verse, much of it emerging from a conventual context: 'La condición social de la mujer de esta época ofrece la paradoja de que ella disfrutaba de mayor libertad *intramuros* que *extramuros*'.⁴⁹ Such an understanding of the nature of conventual space has informed feminist inquiry into the writerly lives of early modern Spanish women. In recent explorations of the epistolary mode amongst women, the cell is often reframed as the archetypal 'room of one's own': 'en el interior de los conventos las monjas dispusieron de mayores oportunidades para aprender, de tiempos para escribir, motivaciones para hacerlo y de un lugar para ello, la celda cuál habitación propia *avant la lettre*'.⁵⁰ Irish women were undoubtedly a vital presence within these seventeenth-century spaces of intercultural encounter; hence we wish to bring an awareness of the complex factors underpinning female authorship within the Spanish context to bear amidst critical appraisals of Browne's work.

In locating Mother Browne amidst her Spanish Franciscan sisters, we should not neglect the thread that connects new generations of seventeenth-century female writers to the figure of Santa Teresa, the 'hilo conductor' identified by Barbeito Carneiro, who notes an affinity between the

49 Julián Olivares & Elizabeth Boyce, 'Introduction' to their anthology, *Tras el espejo la musa escribe. Lírica femenina de los Siglos de Oro*. (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno Editores 1993), (pp. 10–11).

50 Antonio Castillo Gómez, 'Cartas desde el convento: modelos epistolares femeninos en la España de la Contrarreforma', *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, Anejo XIII (2014), 141–68 (p. 142).

Franciscan and Carmelite traditions.⁵¹ While the publication of Teresa of Ávila's work has long been acknowledged as pivotal within a genealogy of Hispanic women writers, Nieves Baranda has recently underlined the significance of the framing of the saint's texts by figures such as Fray Luis (prefacing the *Obras*, 1588), and Teotonio Bragança (her *Camino de perfección* (Évora, 1583)).⁵² While they note that her words must be divinely inspired, in contrast to previous examples of spiritual writings by women, Teresa's works are no longer presented as: 'una voz usurpada por Dios', on the contrary '*las palabras que escribe son de Teresa, aunque Dios guíe sus pasos, su vida, su obra y permanezca siempre con ella*' (emphasis added).⁵³ The publication and authorization of Teresa's works, then, by no means represents the complete erosion of the notion of a divine mandate, but does inaugurate an encroaching sense of female interpretative authority. The implications would extend beyond the Carmelite order, as Antonio Castillo has noted. The *Clarisa Estefanía* de la Encarnación of Lerma, a near contemporary of Mother Browne, for example, recounts a vision of Teresa in which she bequeaths her pen to permit her to write.⁵⁴

Browne's *History* demonstrates that the Teresian legacy fostered an awareness of the potential documentation of not only the inner life, but the record of reform and resilience captured in the saint's *Libro de las Fundaciones*. She marshalls collective networks of female authority to vouch for the authenticity of the details revealed about her deceased sisters: 'Before I undertook to write what this book contains about the deceased Irish nuns, I wrote the convents in which they died and to other trustworthy people, requesting authentic letters about them. I still have these letters in my custody' (15).

While Browne is reliant on the oral testimony of the Spanish nuns who witnessed and shared the last days of these women, their anecdotes are reframed in epistolary mode, the written word and the ownership of the text esteemed more highly by the author.⁵⁵ Browne's comments reveal an

51 Maria Isabel Barbeito Carneiro, identifies 'un hilo conductor secuencial formado por Francisco de Osuna → Teresa de Jesús → Juan de la Cruz → Cecilia del Nacimiento → Antonio Sobrino y Estefanía de la Encarnación' ('En Él fueron transformadas', *Via Spiritus*, 14 [2007], 31–36 [p. 31]).

52 Nieves Baranda, 'Yo soy así y así me he construido: el poder de la voz autobiográfica femenina', *Guaraguao*, 47 (2014), 19–42 (p.22). Baranda refers to

53 Nieves Baranda, 'Yo soy así y así me he construido,' (p. 22).

54 Antonio Castillo Gómez, 'La pluma de Dios: María de Ágreda y la escritura autorizada', *Via Spiritus*, 6 (1999), 103–19 (p. 106); see also *La vida de soror Estefanía de la Encarnación, monja professa en el monasterio de religiosas franciscas de Nuestra Madre Santa Clara en esta villa de Lerma* (Madrid, 1631), Biblioteca Nacional, Mss. 7459, f. 141^v.

55 See Coolahan 'Irish Nun's writing', 94–95, which foregrounds Browne's transparent approach to her methodology.

understanding of collaborative composition which takes into account the collective agreement upon which the creation of categories of sainthood are contingent. María Morrás has noted a recent upsurge in studies which consider sanctity as at once individual spiritual longing and socially constructed category.⁵⁶ We should also take into account the *embodied* nature of such constructions, which arguably find their fullest expressions and certainties in ‘documents’ that are carnal.⁵⁷ The materiality of early modern devotion, and in particular *female* early modern devotion, is compatible with recently proposed definitions of ‘carnal hermeneutics’, offered by Richard Kearney and Brian Treanor. Treanor writes of a hermeneutics that takes account of the junctures between ‘the carnal and the imaginative, realism and interpretation, the animal and the angelic’. What Treanor and Kearney propose, a hermeneutics which rejects an opposition between language and sensibility, word and flesh, can be discerned in the interpretation of carnal sensation and embodied experience in the writings of early modern religious women.⁵⁸ Perhaps the fullest account of an Irish nun’s demise is granted Sister Clara Colette Christian Blake, who died during her year of probation and was professed just before her death:

From childhood she led an exemplary life and had a call to the religious life. She was so fervent that she forsook her parents, country and friends, listening to the words of the psalmist: ‘Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house, etc.’ [...] Those present at her death believed that she knew when she would die, because when offered profession on the morning of her death she said it was not necessary at that time, but in the evening she asked for it most devoutly, and receiving the last Sacraments she gave up her soul to her heavenly Spouse. (*Recollections*, 14)

The opening lines of Psalm 45 cited here (‘Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house’) embed a biblical wedding song within the narrative, which gestures towards the poignant

56 Morrás points to studies such as that by Grace Jantzen on female mysticism which point to the role of the community in the creation of the category of mystic (*Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism* [Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1995]). See María Morrás, ‘Ser santa y mujer (Península Ibérica: siglos XV– XVII)’, *Medievalia*, 18:2 (2015), 9–24 (pp. 11–12).

57 Pointing to the intersection between body and text in cementing Teresa’s sanctity, Carol Slade writes: ‘Efficacious as Teresa’s writing was for her protection and advancement, the text that finally convinced her contemporaries of her special relationship with God was not verbal but carnal’ (*St. Teresa of Avila: Author of a Heroic Life* [Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1995], 127).

58 Brian Treanor ‘Mind the Gap: The Challenge of Matter’, in *Carnal Hermeneutics*, ed. Richard Kearney & Brian Treanor (New York: Fordham U. P., 2015), 59.

death-bed profession of the exile.⁵⁹ This psalm is also framed by a recognition of the complementarity of oral and written communication: 'My heart is stirred by a noble theme / as I recite my verses for the king; *my tongue is the pen of a skilful writer*', its images of raiment and royal union unfurling within a celebration of the memorializing power of the writer—the closing lines being: 'I will perpetuate your memory through all generations; therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever'. Key to the preservation of the novice's memory, however, is the testimony her corpse provides:

After her death she became so beautiful as if showing the glory her soul enjoyed in heaven. And many came to the choir grille to see with wonder such beauty in a dead corpse. As the blessed novice lay on her death-bed in Málaga, a holy nun in the convent of Caballero de Gracia in Madrid, Sister Cate Evangelist, who lived and died with a reputation of sanctity, told a remarkable thing about her. Though she always kept God's favours to her as a secret, moved with compassion towards a cousin of the novice much grieved because the latter was dying, she told the cousin as a comfort that when the novice passed through Madrid on her way to Málaga, she asked her to pray earnestly that she might be able to profess the Rule of St. Clare, and this she did. 'But', said she 'as I was praying a few days ago, I saw her near me, kneeling, with a sweet and modest countenance, her eyes fixed on the ground, beseeching me to pray that she would be professed.' A few days after this good religious told this, news came of the death and profession of the novice as narrated. Both she and Sister Elizabeth are buried in the low choir of the monastery and are held in great veneration. (14–15)

As Browne seeks to enshrine and enshroud Clara, her text effects a preservation in language of the corporeal testimony of holiness represented by the unearthly beauty of the corpse, which attracts viewers to the threshold of the enclosed order, unsettling the boundaries between private devotion and public display, whilst again recalling Lehfeltdt's understanding of the convent space as a 'permeable cloister', permitting the tangible passage and presence of individuals.⁶⁰ Affirmations of the preservation of the saintly body

59 The pain of estrangement from family which entry to the convent necessitates is memorably evoked in Teresa's *Libro de la Vida*: 'Acuérdaseme, a todo mi parecer y con verdad, que cuando salí de casa de mi padre no creo será mas el sentimiento cuando me muera. Porque me parece cada hueso se me apartaba por sí, que como no había amor de Dios que quitase el amor del padre y parientes, era todo haciéndome una fuerza tan grande que, si el Señor no me ayudara, no bastaran mis consideraciones para ir adelante' (IV, 1). [You need to cite the specific edition of the *Libro de la Vida* from which you are quoting]. *Obras Completas de Santa Teresa de Jesús*. Ed. Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1962).

60 Elizabeth Lehfeltdt, *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain: The Permeable Cloister* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005). This 'biological' metaphor was also developed by Alison Weber,

after death are, of course, highly conventional hagiographical tropes and abound within Browne's account.⁶¹ Notably, however, we later find a correspondence between the merits associated with the novice Sister Clara in life ('Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house') and the body parts which survive decay: 'As the novice's tomb was opened nearly five years after her death, in order to bury another there, her right ear and tongue were found to be as fresh and entire as when she was alive; and the nuns of the convent, at the sight of such a marvel, extracted her teeth to have them as relics'.

The fervour around the relics reveal how tightly affection and piety, and the corporeal and spiritual are coiled within the conventual context. The corpse of the Irish companion is now transformed into a locus of wonder—in this collective ritual of mourning the nuns' aim not merely to preserve a memento of a departed sister, but an attempt to claim and possess a fragment of the celestial, residually present in the bodily remains, creating a body politic centred on the female body, claimed, shared and dispersed. The visual testimony, the unearthly beauty of the novice's corpse is juxtaposed with the spectral image of the nun's apparition to Cate Evangelist before her death, underscoring her continuing presence. The immediate transmission of the news verifies the account provided by Browne, oral testimony anticipating its double verification and facilitating a network of participation between displaced sisters.

Jane Tar has suggested that Spanish Franciscan nuns are particularly associated with the phenomenon of bilocation, here attributed to Sister Clara. Whilst literary production presented one means to breach the boundaries of the cloister, the phenomenon of bilocation, an attribute associated with 'living saints' was another. Tar echoes scholars such as Stephen Haliczer regarding an arc of suppression and suspicion around female mysticism in the mid-late sixteenth century, followed by a resurgence of activity after Trent, which met with greater endorsement by church and royal authorities into the seventeenth century.⁶² By the 1620s, the phenomenon was discussed with a lessened trepidation by female

'Locating Holiness in Early Modern Spain: Convents, Caves and Houses', in *Structures and Subjectivities: Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Joan Hartman & Adele Seeff (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 2007), 50–74.

61 For example, on Sister Elizabeth Baptist (Lynch), who died in the convent of Immaculate Conception, Málaga, Browne draws upon the authority of the confessor: 'Her confessor testified about her that he had never in all his life dealt with a more pure soul. Some years after her death, as another nun was being buried near her, some of her grave was uncovered and her body was seen to be fresh and white, without any bad odour' (*Recollections*, ed. O'Brien, 14).

62 Jane Tar, 'Flying through the Empire: The Visionary Journeys of Early Modern Nuns', in *Women's Voices and the Politics of the Spanish Empire: From Convent Cell to Imperial Court*, ed. Jennifer L. Eich, Jeanne Gillespie & Lucia G. Harrison (New Orleans: Univ. Press of the South, 2008), 263–302. See also Stephen Haliczer, *Between Exaltation and Infamy: Female Mystics in the Golden Age of Spain* (Oxford: Oxford U. P., 2002).

visionaries, and cited in documentation supporting beatification. Tar points to prominent predecessors ('Flying Franciscans') within the Spanish Poor Clares, including Mother Juana de la Cruz (1481–1534), whose published biographies circulated in the seventeenth century. Indeed, an energetic campaign for Mother Juana's beatification took place alongside that of St Teresa.⁶³

Madre Luisa de la Ascensión (1565–1635) achieved celebrity for numerous reported mystical journeys, establishing a paradigm for near contemporaries of Mother Browne including Sor María de Ágreda (1602–1665) and Sor Estefanía de la Encarnación (1595–1665). Particularly in the colonial context, reports of bilocation appear to persist into the late seventeenth century—Lisa Vollendorf has pointed to Spanish-American examples which reveal the affinity felt by colonial religious women with their Peninsular forebears. In 1614, Francisca de Miranda, a Mexican nun claimed to have been cured by the intervention of Santa Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582), whilst the Colombian Poor Clare Gerónima Nava y Saavedra in the late seventeenth century (1669–1727) recalls a vision of travelling to Asia to convert souls to Catholicism.⁶⁴

Within Spain, communities of exiled Irish women bear witness to the sanctity of their companions, and accounts of visionary experience reveal ~~bespeak~~ a kinship in exile that transcends the fragmentation of the order, and linguistic and cultural barriers. Depictions of the miraculous, in fact, consistently reveal a preoccupation with communication; Coolahan points to the account of Sister Julian Anthony (Blake's) death at a monastery of St Clare in Orduña as an example of some Irish women divinely granted unexplained and unprecedented linguistic prowess upon their deaths:

One thing is, that though always very shy about speaking Spanish, some days before her death she spoke as fluently as if she were a native of Spain. [...] she had the *Te Deum Laudamus* played for her on harp and they sang it together. The community took such delight in this that each one said inwardly: 'What sweetness we feel; is it to be in heaven or assisting at a happy death?' (15–16)

Notably, Browne acknowledges that her own account draws upon a report sent by the Abbess at Orduña; within this report by the Spanish abbess each sister is granted an inner life, yet they are all united in questioning the significance of their shared, sensuous experience, which has been created by Sister Julian Anthony's unprecedented communicative abilities.

⁶³ Tar, 'Flying through the Empire', 284–85.

⁶⁴ Vollendorf, 'Transatlantic Ties', 79. See also Tar, 'Flying through the Empire', 296–98. The source for Gerónima Nava y Saavedra's vision is Stacey Schlau, *Spanish American Women's Use of the Word: Colonial through Contemporary Narratives* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2001), 14.

If we compare these testimonies with the Spanish account of a near contemporary, the aforementioned Sor Estefanía de la Encarnación, we find that the death of a companion is often a catalyst for visionary experience. In Cap. XVIII of Sor Estefanía's account, the depiction of the death of a close friend is given substantial treatment. In this chapter alone we find the sense of sisterhood and shared grief, the desire to intercede on behalf of a beloved companion, and a vision of Christ, and of purgatory: 'estando en la cama fuy suspendida, y me pareció que me metían por el propio centro de la tierra, que estaba abierto, y allí me enseñaron una llama voraz y fuerte, a modo de una bomba de fuego[...]'.⁶⁵

Sor Estefanía is granted privileged knowledge, a wisdom born out of the 'amistad tan estrecha'. Following the vision of purgatory the speaker (Sor Estefanía) recounts her interventions with the Lord on behalf of her friend, to ask that she be spared the torment glimpsed in this vision. Tar posits that journeys to purgatory find a precedent in Mother Juana's early sixteenth-century account, again establishing a paradigm for later writers.⁶⁶ In Browne's account, Clare Maria, who died in Salamanca, ~~and~~ appeared to the aunt of the abbess the night after her death: 'Kissing her three times, she vanished, leaving the aunt comforted; but for three days afterwards she felt her lips cold from the kissing. She judged by this that the deceased Sister was not yet in glory, but near to it'. (*Recollections*, 16) As Kearney reminds us: 'Central to the interpretation of embodied life is evaluation. The ancient term for wisdom, *sapientia*, comes from *sapere*, to taste. *Sapere-savourer-savoir*. This etymological line speaks legions, reminding us that our deepest knowing is tasting and touching'.⁶⁷ Certainty resides in this spectral trans-cultural contact, which none the less leaves a physical trace on the living body which can be interpreted with confidence. This renewed flowering of female piety, to include visionary experience, has been linked by historian José L. Sánchez Lora with a generalized Baroque sensibility characterized by a taste for wonder, *admiratio*.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, ~~Nonetheless~~ the ramifications of potential accusations of heresy or vanity do not disappear; these are evident in the reluctance and reticence of Browne's glancing reference to Sister Cate, who 'always kept God's favours to her as a secret'. Within the complex subjectivity of the religious exile even the sacrifice required to pursue the contemplative life must be interrogated. Of Mary

65 Cap. XVIII entitled 'En que se trata del suceso de una monja desta casa en Vida y Muerte; acerca de las inteligencias que della tubo esta sierva de Dios' (see Bibliografía de Escritoras Españolas, directed by Nieves Baranda, <<http://www.bieses.net/>> [accessed 12 February 2015]).

66 Tar, 'Flying through the Empire', 271.

67 Richard Kearney, 'What is Carnal Hermeneutics?', *New Literary History*, 46 (2015), 99–124 (p. 99).

68 José L. Sánchez Lora, *Mujeres, conventos y formas de la religiosidad barroca* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1988).

Augustine, whose death at Madrid, Caballero de Gracia she probably witnessed, Browne writes poignantly:

[...] when she was dying she declared that the devil was inciting her to vainglory for leaving her country, parents and friends in order to fulfil the duties of monastic life. To overcome this she besought the prayers and assistance of her confessor and the religious women present. With this she overcame the infernal enemy and reposed in the Lord. (17)

Browne signals the tensions expressed in life and in writing by early modern women – conscious of accusations that a mere desire for fame underpinned the drive to the ‘martyrdom’ of exile, or the notoriety or prominence of the writerly vocation.

5 Material Legacies

While eschewing the language of interiority, and the possibilities for self-expression associated with the spiritual writings of her Spanish sisters, Browne’s text shuttles between the earthly and the celestial, enriched by shades which reveal the insistence of the host culture upon transcendental possibility. Reverberations of this charismatic style of spirituality reach beyond the cloister, beyond the geographical confines of the Iberian Peninsula, and beyond the persistent tendency to label these expressions of female piety as ‘medieval’. In a similar way, Fanshawe’s texts reveal the host culture’s shaping force. Whether in a Spanish household or at a site of Iberian/Islamic heritage, Fanshawe discovers herself as responsive to the stimulating particularities of the Iberian Peninsula, and this suggests itself both in an appreciation of the aesthetic and in sensitivity to a non-English life encounter. Morrás points to the shared ground we may discern between Browne and Fanshawe’s experience as ‘other’ within their host culture: ‘Si el santo fue calificado por P. Brown (1971, 1998) como “el extranjero, el extraño”, con mayor motivo este calificativo puede aplicarse a las santas, por santas y por mujeres’.⁶⁹ Both writers, among other points of connection, underscore moments of spiritual tolerance and accord, part of a larger engagement with experiences of contact that cut across established historical and cultural barriers. Highlighting the affective and experiential dimensions which may be found when we read beyond national boundaries and literatures, within the writing of Fanshawe and Browne is a shared self-consciousness around the creative endeavour. In this way, their experiences in Spain operate to produce material legacies more durable than the precarious body which is so subject to decay and dispersal.*

⁶⁹ Morrás, ‘Ser santa y mujer’, 10.

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